



Pentland Hills Regional Park

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Case Study



Pentland Hills Regional Park



pentland hills
regional park

The Pentland Hills Regional Park (PHRP) covers 10,000 hectares of land and water and has approximately 100km of network paths. It is a living, working landscape that offers great opportunities to experience, learn about and enjoy the outdoors

Multi-agency

The PHRP covers land contained within Midlothian, West Lothian and the City of Edinburgh Council, who are the lead authority. Working closely with farmers, landowners and communities, the PHRP seeks to retain the essential character of the hills. The majority of the land holding within the PHRP is in private ownership, therefore aims can only be achieved with the ongoing support of these land managers on the basis of demonstrable mutual benefits



Key responsibilities

The PHRP Service has the responsibility of managing the path network and infrastructure, including repairs and maintenance, liaison with landowners, farmers and tenants, user groups, organisations with an interest in the PHRP, promoting and encouraging responsible access, monitoring and protecting wildlife and cultural heritage, and, promoting the local economy of the hills (e.g. undertaking lambing and dog fouling initiatives).

Pentland Hills Regional Park – Assessment Criteria

Welcoming Place

The PHRP has several car parks which provide information and an access point to the hills. Interpretation panels and information boards are strategically positioned to provide a welcome and inform visitors what to expect on their visit. The Park also has two main visitor centres at Harlaw and Flotterstone which provide toilets and further information. In addition, it has its own dedicated website and a range of leaflets.



Healthy, Safe and Secure

The PHRP path network and car parks are regularly inspected with defects being dealt with appropriately. Information is posted during the winter months of any particular risks, e.g. ice on reservoirs. Liaison with local stakeholders, landowners and farmers on events is undertaken to reduce conflict and impact in the hills.



Well Maintained and Clean

Through regular inspections, any litter is either removed or reported to the relevant landowner to ensure that our park is clean. Their buildings each have a regular cleaning schedule. Maintenance inspection is also carried out manually.



Assessment Criteria

Environmental Management

The PHRP carries out projects while being mindful of the surrounding environment and endeavours to keep disturbance to a minimum. They always try to use materials that are on site and try to keep travels costs for materials brought in to a minimum. In addition, they promote the use of public and sustainable transport and the ethos of caring for the hills for future generations.



Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

The PHRP service carries out a number of surveys throughout the year and links in with the three local authority Biodiversity Action Plans. Surveys are carried out by staff but also with trained volunteers. Practical conservation tasks are also carried out, for example meadow and wildflower garden management with volunteer groups. In addition, large scale tree planting has also taken place recently on the southeast slopes. The park has a number of historical features, including Castle Law Souterrain, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and others, all of which are inspected regularly.

Assessment Criteria

Community Involvement

The PHRP has its own dedicated Voluntary Ranger Service which complements the work of the PHRP service in carrying out patrols, visitor interaction and guidance to the public. The PHRP also has a close working relationship with the Friends of the Pentland Hills in the work that they undertake. In addition, the PHRP service facilitates other community and corporate groups in practical conservation tasks such as drainage works, path improvements and meadow management.



Marketing and Communication

The PHRP utilises a number of aspects to promote the site e.g. websites, leaflets, visitor centres, and social media.

Management

The PHRP aims to provide a responsive, flexible and high quality management service that delivers the aims of the Regional Park. As such they are a flexible, adaptable and committed team who work well with other organisations, land owners and stakeholders. Regular meetings and problem solving discussions take place in order that those involved can contribute and be supported in resolving issues.



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